

Findings from the Quantitative Research for the Frederick County Commission on Women's Study



Karen Lewis
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I. Background

In October of 1994, the Frederick County Commission for Women (FCCFW) prepared a summary of the findings from a "Needs Assessment Project" that was conducted during 1993-1994. The data for this report was collected through a citizen questionnaire, a public forum tape, a speaker's bureau report, a focus group meeting and personal interviews.

The needs, problems and concerns that surfaced were on the following topics:

- ?? Children
- ?? Discrimination
- ?? Drugs and alcohol
- ?? Economic issues
- ?? Education
- ?? Health care
- ?? Housing
- ?? Isolation
- ?? Psychological
- ?? Safety
- ?? Services
- ?? Stereotypes
- ?? Voice

Given the population changes in the county over the past ten years, the FCCFW felt that it was important to determine:

- ?? Whether the past issues are still important
- ?? Where improvements have been made
- ?? If new issues have emerged
- ?? How demographic changes have affected the issues

II. Methodology

Both a quantitative and qualitative research effort were part of the design for this study. Between March and June of this year eight focus groups were conducted among diverse groups of women in Frederick County. A summary of these groups will be prepared separately.

The quantitative research was distributed and collected during the same period. A questionnaire was distributed to all focus group participants. In addition, the questionnaire was randomly distributed to women throughout the county.

356 questionnaires were completed. The data from the questionnaires was input and analyzed by utilizing statistical software that measured statistical differences among respondent groups. Given the sample proportion to the population, the results have a margin of error of plus or minus five percent.

III. Research Objectives

- ?? What are the key needs and issues of women in Frederick County?
- ?? How well are needs being met and issues addressed in areas of critical importance?
- ?? How do these needs differ based on demographic segments?
- ?? How do these results compare to the 1994 study?
- ?? How can the FCCFW utilize these findings to positively impact the female citizens of Frederick County?

IV. Executive Summary

Overall, women in Frederick County appear to be more concerned about economic issues than service offerings and availability. Of the top seven “needs,” four dealt with pay and job opportunity equity issues. Affordable housing issues are the next most important category of issues.

When measuring the gap between the importance of these needs and how well Frederick County delivers on these needs, the largest perceived disparity is also on employment equity and housing affordability needs. The only other need that ranked in the top ten of gaps between importance and perceived delivery was affordable and available health care for women.

While quality public education ranked number three in importance, there was only an 18.5 point gap between importance and perceived delivery. This is a relatively small gap compared to many of the other needs.

The other major section of the survey was devoted to the importance of a list of “issues” and an evaluation of how well Frederick County performs on these issues. The largest gap (35.9) was identified as “political support from the public and elected local, county and state officials on issues of concern to women.”

Violence in schools is the issue with the second largest gap between importance and perceived satisfaction (35.7). It is interesting to note that respondents appear to be more satisfied with the delivery of quality education than the management of violence in the schools.

Respondents also appear to be concerned about the perceived gap between “availability of affordable education or training” relative to its importance (31.2). This could be underlying the dissatisfaction in many of the employment equity topics.

Survey participants appear to have difficulty in “the ease of finding information on services and/or coordination of services.” The gap between importance and perceived delivery is (30.5).

When asked about discrimination relative to age, race or sexual orientation, respondents were most concerned about both the importance and perceived experience of age discrimination issues (27.3).

V. Detailed Findings

A. Needs vs. Experience

	Importance (Top Two Box)	Perceived Delivery	Gap
1. Pay equity for women	97.9%	45.3%	(52.6)
2. Affordable health care	97.5%	42.7%	(54.8)
3. Quality public education	97.1%	78.6%	(18.5)
4. Local jobs that provide a salary that can support a family	96.9%	32.7%	(64.2)
5. Employers offering flexible work schedules	95.8%	49.1%	(46.7)
6. Easily available health care	95.4%	55.2%	(40.2)
7. Promotions for women	95.2%	46.9%	(48.3)
8. Affordable housing, to either rent or buy	93.6%	26.3%	(67.3)
9. Ability to rent or buy housing regardless of where a woman's income comes from, whether or not she has children or the number of children she has	90.0%	25.6%	(64.4)
10. Affordable, decent rental housing	89.3%	26.6%	(62.7)
11. Services to address violence against women/ domestic violence	89.0%	69.8%	(19.2)
12. Available health care for older women	88.6%	46.0%	(42.6)
13. Affordable health care for older women	87.3%	41.5%	(45.8)
14. Affordable child care	87.1%	44.4%	(42.7)
15. Easily accessible child care	84.6%	53.6%	(31.0)
16. Services in the community if you have special needs such as not speaking English or being deaf or vision impaired	83.1%	56.9%	(26.2)
17. Available health care if you are a woman with special challenges	81.2%	47.5%	(33.7)
18. Child-rearing and parenting education	79.6%	66.5%	(13.1)
19. Affordable health care if you are a woman with special challenges	79.5%	46.8%	(32.7)
20. Educational opportunities if you have special challenges	79.4%	63.1%	(16.3)

21. Affordable family counseling/therapy	77.5%	53.2%	(24.3)
22. Housing for homeless families	77.4%	31.7%	(45.7)
23. Easily available information on family planning and reproduction	76.8%	77.8%	1.0
24. Emergency housing	76.6%	41.1%	(35.5)
25. Collecting child support	75.8%	52.2%	(23.6)
26. Affordable counseling services	75.7%	50.3%	(25.4)
27. Available health care if English is not your first language	75.6%	50.6%	(25.0)
28. Job opportunities if you have special challenges	74.4%	48.3%	(26.1)
29. Educational opportunities if English is not your first language	74.3%	60.2%	(14.1)
30. Affordable health care if English is not your first language	74.0%	42.7%	(31.3)
31. Transitional housing	73.8%	40.5%	(33.3)
32. Affordable treatment for HIV/AIDs	71.1%	46.8%	(24.3)
33. Job opportunities if English is not your first language	64.4%	54.0%	(10.4)
34. Affordable detoxification center	58.3%	45.1%	(13.2)
35. Increased chemical dependency treatment options	55.2%	40.9%	(14.3)

B. Issues vs. How Well They Are Addressed

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Importance (Top Two Box)</u>	<u>Perceived Delivery</u>	<u>Gap</u>
1. Availability of affordable education or training	93.7%	62.5%	(31.2)
2. Violence in schools	93.0%	57.3%	(35.7)
3. The ease of finding information on services and/or coordination of services	91.4%	60.9%	(30.5)
4. Visibility and acceptance of women in positions of responsibility in the media, community and at work	90.3%	66.5%	(23.8)
5. Sexual harassment in schools	89.4%	65.5%	(23.9)
6. Support systems for women	88.5%	62.9%	(25.6)
7. Women's voice and involvement in local government	87.9%	63.6%	(24.3)
8. Sexual harassment at work	86.6%	65.7%	(20.9)
9. Political support from the public and elected local, county and state officials on issues of concern to women	86.1%	50.2%	(35.9)
10. Discrimination based on age	86.0%	58.7%	(27.3)

11. A sense of community for women	85.7%	61.7%	(24.0)
12. Community support services for older women	83.7%	56.9%	(26.8)
13. Discrimination based on race	79.6%	58.1%	(21.5)
14. Discrimination based on sexual orientation	70.7%	51.8%	(18.9)

C. Demographic Summary (356 total respondents)

1. Sex - 98.2% female, 1.8% male
2. Age - Under 30 (44.1 %), 30-49 (34.8%), 50 or older (14.5%) Statistical Mean 32.23
3. Race - White (79.0%), African American (9.9%), Hispanic (5.4%), Asian (5.1%), Other (.6%)
4. Education - High School (28.6%) College (50.0%), Post graduate (18.3%), Other (3.1%)
5. Marital status - Married (51.5%), Divorced/separated (11.25), Widowed (3.2%), Never married (33.85)
6. Home Ownership - Own (52.1%), Rent single- family home (2.7%), Rent apartment/townhouse (22.9%), Live with family member/ friend (19.3%), Other (3.0%)
7. Household income - Under \$50,000 (57.3%), More than \$50,000 (42.0%)
8. Degree of Community Involvement- very (9.7%), Moderate (42.9%), Low or very little (46.5%)
9. How long have you lived in Frederick County? Statistical Mean (9.98 years)

VI. Implications

It appears that the “needs” and “issues” of greatest importance to women in Frederick County are economically based. For the most part they deal with either employment equity or housing affordability. There is also the largest disparity between the importance of these items and the perception of how well they are being delivered.

The FCCFW will need to work with a variety of other community groups, public officials, social service agencies and members of the business community in order to communicate the findings of the research. This will assist these groups in understanding the priorities and perceptions of their services so that they can develop feasible corrective action programs. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the following audiences be included in presentations on the findings:

- ??The FCCFW Commissioners
- ??The Frederick County Board of Commissioners
- ??Other Frederick City and County elected officials
- ??The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- ??Participants in the research
- ??Officers of Frederick County social service organizations
- ??Educators
- ??Health officials
- ??Law enforcement officials
- ??JTA
- ??Interfaith Housing
- ??Rotary organizations
- ??Department of Aging
- ??Members of the press

While the Affordable Housing issues may not come as a surprise to many, the perceived gap in many of the work place equity and accommodation issues may. It is important to alert members of the business community to these concerns. If they are not addressed, there could be numerous efficiency and productivity consequences. There also appears to be a wide disparity between the need for political support from the public and elected local, county and state officials on issues of concern to women and the perceived delivery of that support. This is particularly important to communicate during an election year.

Finally, as we witness the aging of the population there appears to be concern about the delivery and affordability of a variety of services to older women. The Department of Aging may find this information useful when identifying priorities.

In addition to communicating the findings of this study to several key “influencers” and community “providers,” there is another key communication project that the FCCFW could take on. There appears to be a strong need to publicize the existence of several community directories and service guides that already exist. This information on all of the resources and services for women and where to go to obtain assistance or more

information is very much in demand.

VII. Next Steps

? Determine what other information should be cross tabulated	Complete
? Determine how the findings should help prioritize FCCFW's 2006 priorities	Complete
? Define what actionable results are desired from the research findings and the communications process	Complete
? Identify groups/individuals who should hear the findings	Complete
? Develop a presentation schedule and communicate it	Complete
? Discuss how progress from findings will be monitored over time	2 nd Qtr.'06
? Obtain reactions and input from community presentations and incorporate in future research	On-going

Frederick County Commission for Women Needs Assessment Survey



Thank you for your interest in taking this survey conducted by the Frederick County Commission For Women, FCCFW. The FCCFW strives to be the voice for women in Frederick County, and so this survey is designed to identify the most urgent and widespread needs of women in the county. During 2005, the FCCFW will be surveying hundreds of women across the county through interviews, paper surveys such as this and by conducting focus groups. We'll survey women of all ages and backgrounds, including young women, stay-at-home moms, working women and older women. We will also survey women of varying ethnic backgrounds.

Your individual answers will be kept confidential, but the overall results of this survey will be put into actionable recommendations that will be shared with the Frederick County Commission, Frederick County women's organizations, social service agencies and educational institutions, and will guide the focus of the FCCFW in the years ahead.

Section 1 – NEEDS

Below are a number of needs that may be important to women in Frederick County. Please rank the below NEEDS to the degree they are important to you. Put an x in the box that most closely defines your situation:

1 = important 2 = somewhat important 3 = not very important 4 = not important at all and NA indicates the issue is not applicable to you.

Need	1 Important Need for you	2 Somewhat important	3 Not very important	4 Not important at all	NA Not applicable to your situation
1. Affordable child care					
2. Easily accessible child care					
3. Child-rearing and parenting education					
4. Quality public education					
5. Affordable family counseling/therapy					
6. Affordable detoxification center					
7. Increased chemical dependency treatment options					
8. Affordable counseling services					
9. Local jobs that provide a salary that can support a family					
10. Promotions for women					
11. Pay equity for women					
12. Employers offering flexible work schedules					
13. Collecting child support					
14. Job opportunities if English is not your first language					
15. Job opportunities if you have special challenges					
16. Educational opportunities if you have special challenges					
17. Educational opportunities if English is not your first language					
18. Easily available health care					

19. Affordable health care					
20. Available health care for older women					
21. Affordable health care for older women					
22. Available health care if English is not your first language					
Need	1 Important Need for you	2 Somewhat important	3 Not very important	4 Not important at all	NA Not applicable to your situation
23. Affordable health care if English is not your first language.					
24. Available health care if you are a woman with special challenges					
25. Affordable health care if you are a woman with special challenges					
26. Easily available information on family planning and reproduction					
27. Affordable treatment for HIV/AIDs					
28. Affordable housing, to either rent or buy (circle either buy or rent as it applies to you)					
29 Affordable, decent rental housing					
30. Emergency housing					
31. Transitional housing					
32. Housing for homeless families					
33. Ability to rent or buy housing regardless of where a women's income comes from, whether or not she has children or the number of children she has					
34. Services to address violence against women/ domestic violence					
35. Services in the community if you have special needs, such as not speaking English or being deaf or vision impaired					

Now I'd like you to rate these same needs based on how well you believe these needs are addressed in Frederick County. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning that the county is doing an excellent job of addressing the need, 2 meaning the county is addressing the need moderately well, 3 meaning they are addressing it poorly and 4 meaning it is not being addressed at all (or NA for not applicable or if you're not familiar with this issue), please rank these areas based on your own experiences.

Need	1 Excellent	2 Moderately well	3 Addressed poorly	4 Not addressed at all	NA Not applicable – don't know
1. Affordable child care					
2. Easily accessible child care					
3. Child-rearing and parenting education					
4. Quality public education					
5. Affordable family counseling/therapy					
6. Affordable detoxification center					
7. Increased chemical dependency treatment options					
8. Affordable counseling services					
9. Local jobs that provide a salary that can support a family					
10. Promotions for women					

11. Pay equity for women					
12. Employers offering flexible work schedules					
13. Collecting child support					
14. Job opportunities if English is not your first language					
15. Job opportunities if you have special challenges					
Need	1 Excellent	2 Moderately well	3 Addressed poorly	4 Not addressed at all	NA Not applicable – don't know
16. Educational opportunities if you have special challenges					
17. Educational opportunities if English is not your first language					
18. Easily available health care					
19. Affordable health care					
20. Available health care for older women					
21. Affordable health care for older women					
22. Available health care if English is not your first language					
23. Affordable health care if English is not your first language					
24. Available health care if you are a woman with special challenges					
25. Affordable health care if you are a woman with special challenges					
26. Easily available information on family planning and reproduction					
27. Affordable treatment for HIV/AIDs					
28. Affordable housing, to either rent or buy (circle either rent or buy as it applies to you)					
29. Affordable, decent rental housing					
30. Emergency housing					
31. Transitional housing					
32. Housing for homeless families					
33. Ability to rent or buy housing regardless of where a women's income comes from, whether or not she has children or the number of children she has					
34. Services to address violence against women/ domestic violence					
35. Services in the community if you have special needs, such as not speaking English or being deaf or vision impaired					

Section 2 -- ISSUES

Below are a number of issues that may be important to women in Frederick County. Please rank the below ISSUES to the degree they important to you. Put an x in the box that most closely defines your situation: 1 = important 2 = somewhat important 3 = not very important 4 = not important at all and NA indicates the issue is not applicable to you.

Issue	1 Important issue for you	2 Some- what	3 Not very important	4 Not important at	NA Not applicable
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		important		all	to your situation
1. Discrimination based on age					
2. Discrimination based on race					
3. Discrimination based on sexual orientation					
4. Sexual harassment at work					
5. Sexual harassment in schools					
6. Availability of affordable education or training					
7. A sense of community for women					
8. Support systems for women					
9. Community support services for older women					
10. Political support from the public and elected local, county and state officials on issues of concern for women					
11. Women's voice and involvement in local government					
12. Visibility and acceptance of women in positions of responsibility in the media, community and at work.					
13. The ease of finding information on services and/or coordination of services					
14. Violence in schools					

Now please rate these same issues based on how well you believe they are being addressed in Frederick County. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning that the county is doing an excellent job of addressing an issue, 2 meaning it is addressing the issue moderately well, 3 meaning it is doing a poor job of addressing the issue and 4 meaning it is not being addressed at all (or NA for not applicable or if you're not familiar with this issue), please rank these based on your own experiences.

Issue	1 Excellent	2 Moderately well	3 Addressed poorly	4 Not addressed at all	NA Not applicable – don't know
1. Discrimination based on age					
2. Discrimination based on race					
3. Discrimination based on sexual orientation					
4. Sexual harassment at work					
5. Sexual harassment in schools					
6. Availability of affordable education or training					
7. A sense of community for women					
8. Support systems for women					
9. Community support services for older women					
10. Political support from the public and elected local, county and state officials on issues of concern for women					
11. Women's voice and involvement in local government					
12. Visibility and acceptance of women in positions of responsibility in the media, community and at work					
13. The ease of finding information on services and/or coordination of services					

14. Violence in schools					
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Section 3 – Opinions and Demographic Information

In your opinion, what are the three most important issues affecting women in Frederick County today?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How, specifically, do you think the Frederick County Commission for Women could benefit women in Frederick County?

Do you have any additional comments – perhaps on needs you see that were not included in this survey:

Demographic information. This information will be kept strictly confidential

Please check the categories that apply to you

Gender F ☐ M ☐ **Age** ____ **Race/Ethnicity** White ____ African American ____ Hispanic ____ Asian ____ Other ____

Education High School ____ College ____ Post graduate ____ Other ____ **Occupation** (please list) _____

Marital Status Married ____ Divorced/separated ____ Widowed ____ Never married ____

What is your current living arrangement? Own single family home ____ Own condominium/townhouse ____

Rent single family home ____ Rent apartment/townhouse ____ Live with family member/friend ____

Other (specify) _____

If you own, what is the value of your home? Under \$149,900 ____ \$150,000 - \$249,900 ____ \$250,000 - \$349,900 ____ \$350,000 - \$449,900 ____ \$500,000 - \$599,000 ____ \$600,000 & above ____

Annual household income? Please include income from all sources, before taxes. (This question is for statistical purposes only – there will be no way to identify your response.) Less than \$20,000 ____ \$20,000 – \$35,000 ____ \$35,000 - \$50,000 ____ \$60,000 - \$75,000 ____ \$100,000+ ____

Degree of community involvement: Very ____ Moderate ____ Low or very little ____

How long have you lived in Frederick County? (years) ____ months ____

I would like more information about the Frederick County Commission for Women and/or am interested in working on a Commission team.

Name _____ Telephone _____ Cell phone _____

Email address _____

Special area of interest/expertise _____

Please place your survey in an envelope and seal it to retain your confidentiality. Or place it in the designated box (if available) or mail to: FCCFW, Winchester Hall, 12 East Church St., Frederick, MD 21701-5243, 301-694-1066.

